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Please amend the claims as indicated:

1. (Previously Presented) A system for expanding the delivery of telecommunication services, comprising:

a master unit, coupled to a wide area network (WAN) comprising an Asynchronous Transfer Mode (ATM)-compatible network, operable to process telecommunication service signals comprising ATM cells for communication with the WAN and with a fixed number of telecommunication service interfaces at the master unit, the master unit comprising:

the fixed number of telecom service interfaces;

a Plain Old Telephone Service (POTS) interface, coupled to a Digital Line Carrier (DLC) system, for exchanging POTS signals between the DLC system and the master unit;

a controller for processing the ATM cells;

a T1 interface, coupled to the ATM-compatible network, for exchanging the ATM cells between the ATM-compatible network and the controller;

a plurality of local ATM-compatible interfaces for communicating the ATM cells and POTS signals to subscribers serviced by the master unit; and

an expansion function, coupled to the controller, the ATM-compatible interfaces and an expansion port, for communicating the ATM cells in the upstream and the downstream directions via the expansion port and for communicating the ATM cells with the local ATM-compatible interfaces;

an expansion unit, coupled via an expansion link to the master unit, comprising an expansion set of telecommunication service interfaces, the expansion unit operable to transmit telecommunication service signals in the upstream direction via the expansion link for processing by the master unit and to receive telecommunication service signals in the downstream direction from the master unit via the expansion link for delivery to the expansion set of telecommunication service interfaces.

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2. (Original) The system of Claim 1 further comprising a second expansion unit, coupled to the expansion unit via a second expansion link, the second expansion unit comprising a second expansion set of telecommunication service interfaces and operable to transmit telecommunication service signals in the upstream direction via a combination of the expansion unit and the pair of expansion links for processing by the master unit and to receive telecommunication service signals in the downstream direction from the master unit via a combination of the expansion unit and the pair of expansion links for delivery to the second expansion set of telecommunication service interfaces.

3. (Original) The system of Claim 1, wherein the expansion link comprises a flexible cable supporting a serial communications interface.

4. (Canceled)

5. (Previously Presented) The system of Claim 1, wherein the expansion unit comprises:  
a plurality of remote ATM-compatible interfaces; and  
an expansion function, coupled with an input expansion port and an output expansion port, for communicating ATM cells in the upstream and downstream directions via the input and output expansion ports and for communicating ATM cells with the remote ATM-compatible interfaces, the input expansion port operable for coupling to the master unit, the output expansion port operable for coupling to another expansion unit.

6-7. (Canceled)

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8. (Previously Presented) In an expandable system for delivering to subscribers ATM-compatible services via a master unit, the master unit comprising:

a predetermined number of local ATM-compatible interfaces, each operable to communicate the ATM-compatible services comprising ATM cells with a corresponding subscriber;

an expansion function, coupled to the local ATM-compatible interfaces and to an expansion port, for communicating the ATM cells via the expansion port and for communicating the ATM cells with the local ATM-compatible interfaces; and

an ATM controller, coupled to an ATM-compatible network, to the local ATM-compatible interfaces, and to the expansion function, operable to process the ATM cells for distribution via the ATM-compatible network, the local ATM-compatible interfaces and the expansion port; and

a Plain Old Telephone Service (POTS) interface, coupled to a Digital Line Carrier (DLC) system and to the local ATM-compatible interfaces, for communicating POTS signals between the DLC system and the subscribers serviced by the local ATM-compatible interfaces.

9. (Canceled)

10. (Previously Presented) The master unit of Claim 8, wherein the ATM controller comprises:

an ATM network interface, coupled to the ATM-compatible network, for communicating the ATM cells with the ATM-compatible network;

an ATM layer processor, responsive to the ATM cells received from the ATM-compatible network to allocate selected ones of the ATM cells for delivery by the local ATM-compatible interfaces or via the expansion port, the ATM layer processor further operable to combine selected ones of the ATM cells received from the local ATM-compatible interfaces or the expansion port for delivery to the ATM-compatible network; and

a controller, coupled to the ATM network interface, the ATM layer processor, and the expansion function, for managing operations of the ATM controller and the expansion function.

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11. (Previously Presented) The master unit of Claim 8, wherein the expansion port is coupled to an expansion unit via a flexible expansion link, the expansion unit operable to expand the delivery of ATM-compatible services to an additional set of subscribers other than the subscribers serviced by the predetermined number of the local ATM-compatible interfaces.

12. (Previously Presented) The master unit of Claim 11, wherein the master unit and the expansion unit comprise separate small form-factor assemblies, each capable of installation in different locations within a cabinet housing for a DLC 1 system.

13. (Previously Presented) The master unit of Claim 11, wherein the expansion unit comprises:

a plurality of remote ATM-compatible interfaces for communicating ATM cells associated with ATM-compatible services with the additional set of subscribers;

an input expansion port for coupling to the expansion link to establish a communication link with the expansion port of the master unit; and

an expansion function, coupled to the input expansion port, for communicating the ATM cells in upstream and downstream directions via the input expansion port and for communicating the ATM cells with the remote ATM-compatible interfaces.

14. (Previously Presented) The master unit of Claim 13, wherein the expansion unit further comprises an output expansion port for connecting the expansion unit to another expansion unit via a second expansion link, the expansion function of the expansion unit coupled to the output expansion port for communicating the ATM cells in the upstream and downstream directions via the output expansion port and for communicating the ATM cells with the remote ATM-compatible interfaces.

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15. (Currently Amended) ~~In an~~ An expandable system for delivering ATM-compatible services ~~via an expansion unit operable to expand the delivery of ATM-compatible services to an~~ additional set of subscribers other than subscribers serviced by a predetermined number of local ATM-compatible interfaces available at a Digital Line Carrier (DLC) system, ~~the an expansion unit, comprising:~~

a plurality of remote ATM-compatible interface for communicating ATM cells associated with the ATM-compatible services with the additional set of subscribers;

an input expansion port for coupling to an expansion link to establish a communication link with the DLC system; ~~and~~

an expansion function, coupled to the input expansion port, for communicating the ATM cells in the upstream and downstream directions via the input expansion port and for communicating the ATM cells with the remote ATM-compatible interfaces[.];

a master unit located at the DLC system, coupled to the input expansion port, the master unit comprising:

a predetermined number of the local ATM-compatible interfaces, each operable to communicate the ATM-compatible services comprising ATM cells with a corresponding subscriber;

an expansion function, coupled to the local ATM-compatible interfaces and to an expansion port, for communicating the ATM cells via the expansion port and for communicating the ATM cells with the local ATM-compatible interfaces; and

an ATM controller, coupled to an ATM-compatible network, to the local ATM-compatible interfaces, and to the expansion function, operable to process the ATM cells for distribution via the ATM-compatible network, the local ATM-compatible interfaces and the expansion port; and

a Plain Old Telephone Service (POTS) interface, coupled to the DLC system and to the local ATM-compatible interfaces, for communicating POTS signals between the DLC system and the subscribers serviced by the local ATM-compatible interfaces.

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16. (Currently Amended) The ~~expansion unit~~ expandable system of Claim 15, wherein the expansion unit further comprises an output expansion port for connecting the expansion unit to another expansion unit via an expansion link, the expansion function coupled to the output expansion port for communicating the ATM cells in the upstream and downstream directions via the output expansion port and for communicating the ATM cells with the remote ATM-compatible interfaces.

17-18. (Canceled)

19. (Currently Amended) The ~~expansion unit~~ expandable system of Claim 15~~17~~, wherein the ATM controller comprises:

an ATM network interface, coupled to the ATM-compatible network, for communicating the ATM cells with the ATM-compatible network;

an ATM layer processor, responsive to the ATM cells received from the ATM-compatible network to allocate selected ones of the ATM cells for delivery by the local ATM-compatible interfaces or via the expansion port, the ATM layer processor further operable to combine selected ones of the ATM cells received from the local ATM-compatible interfaces or the expansion port for delivery to the ATM-compatible network; and

a controller, coupled to the ATM network interface, the ATM layer processor, and the expansion function of the master unit, for managing operations of the ATM controller and the expansion function.

20-34. (Canceled)

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35. (New) An expandable system for delivering ATM-compatible services to an additional set of subscribers other than subscribers serviced by a predetermined number of local ATM-compatible interfaces available at a Digital Line Carrier (DLC) system, an expansion unit, comprising:

- a plurality of remote ATM-compatible interface for communicating ATM cells associated with the ATM-compatible services with the additional set of subscribers;
- an input expansion port for coupling to an expansion link to establish a communication link with the DLC system;

- an expansion function, coupled to the input expansion port, for communicating the ATM cells in the upstream and downstream directions via the input expansion port and for communicating the ATM cells with the remote ATM-compatible interfaces; and

- a master unit located at the DLC system, coupled to the input expansion port, the master unit comprising:

- a predetermined number of the local ATM-compatible interfaces, each operable to communicate the ATM-compatible services comprising ATM cells with a corresponding subscriber;

- an expansion function, coupled to the local ATM-compatible interfaces and to an expansion port, for communicating the ATM cells via the expansion port and for communicating the ATM cells with the local ATM-compatible interfaces; and

- an ATM controller, coupled to an ATM-compatible network, to the local ATM-compatible interfaces, and to the expansion function, operable to process the ATM cells for distribution via the ATM-compatible network, the local ATM-compatible interfaces and the expansion port, wherein the ATM controller comprises:

- an ATM network interface, coupled to the ATM-compatible network, for communicating the ATM cells with the ATM-compatible network;

- an ATM layer processor, responsive to the ATM cells received from the ATM-compatible network to allocate selected ones of the ATM cells for delivery by the local ATM-compatible interfaces or via the expansion port, the ATM layer processor further operable to combine selected ones of the ATM cells received from the local ATM-compatible interfaces or the expansion port for delivery to the ATM-compatible network; and

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a controller, coupled to the ATM network interface, the ATM layer processor, and the expansion function of the master unit, for managing operations of the ATM controller and the expansion function.

36. (New) The expandable system of Claim 35, wherein the expansion unit further comprises an output expansion port for connecting the expansion unit to another expansion unit via an expansion link, the expansion function coupled to the output expansion port for communicating the ATM cells in the upstream and downstream directions via the output expansion port and for communicating the ATM cells with the remote ATM-compatible interfaces.

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